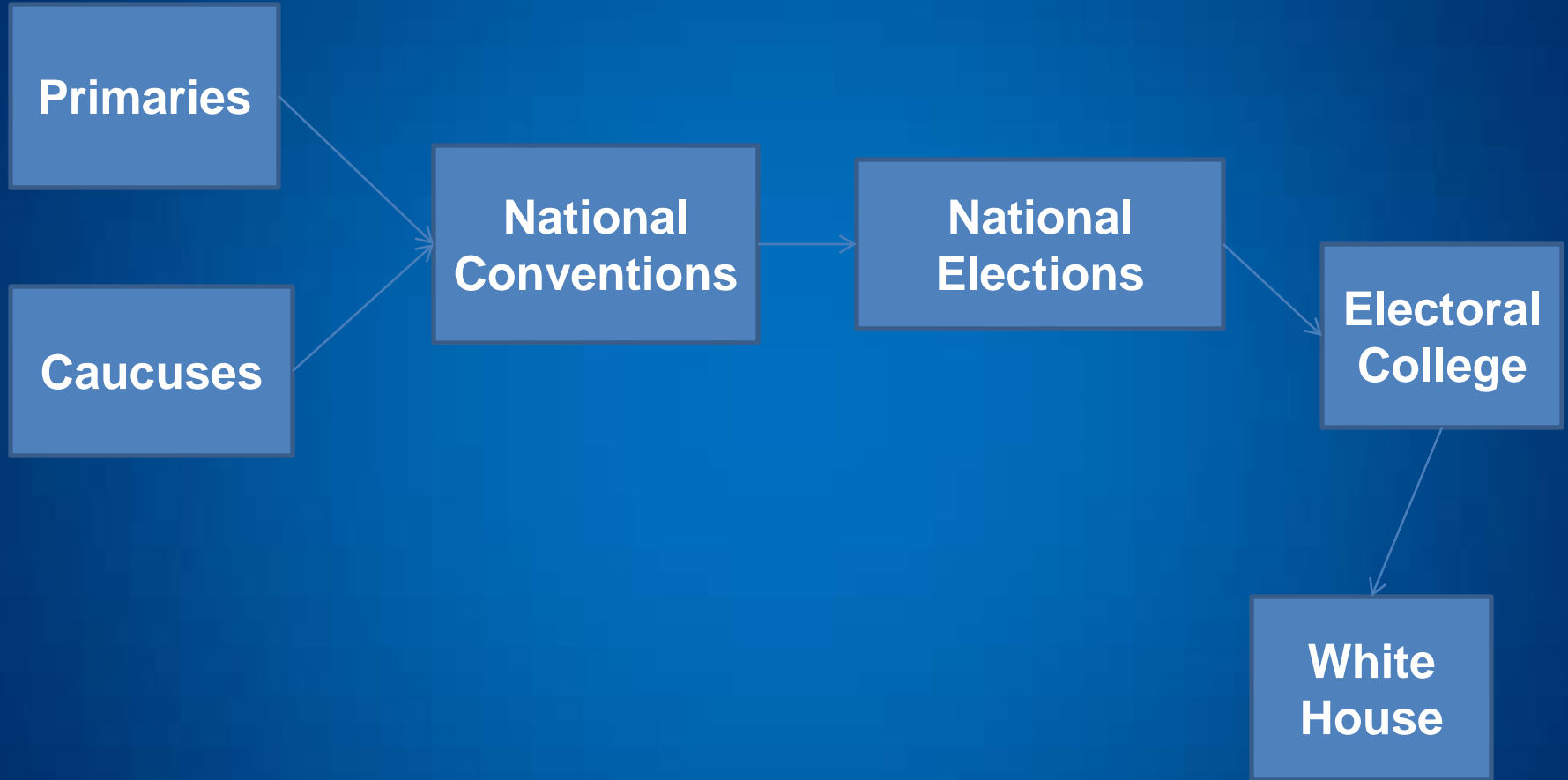


# American Democracy – 2012 Elections



# Steps to the Presidency



# Running for President

- Candidate must be a natural born U.S. citizen and at least 35 years old
- The Electoral College
- Fifty state elections, not just one national election
- Process
- Impact on elections
- Why can't it be changed?



# Running for President

- Elected every 4 years on the first Tuesday of November
- Campaigning unofficially begins at least two years before the election



# Congressional and Local Elections

- **Presidential elections draw national attention but...**
- **Elections for senators, representatives, governors and local officials are the heart of participatory democracy**
- **Congress is bicameral to balance parochial interests with national ones**





# Congressional and Local Elections

- 438 Representatives from the 50 states based on population (2-year terms)
- 1/3 of 100 senators (two from each state elected for six-year terms )
- Need for President to have Congressional support



# Steps to the Nomination – and hopefully the White House

- Official and unofficial campaigns
- Popular recognition and support
- Getting on the state ballots
- Financing
- Winning Party Endorsement: Primaries and Conventions
- Matching policies to issues and demographics



# Political Parties

- Two major parties: Democratic Party and Republican Party
- Party identifications/philosophies: shifts over time
- Republicans: Espouse conservative fiscal and governmental policies
- Democrats: Espouse social network and populist policies
- Independent third parties: splinters versus branches





# American Voters

- Motivating issues
- Voter movements
- Party identification
- Independents
- Swing votes



# Primaries

## Winning Delegates for the National Convention

- Long-term efforts to democratize the selection process
- Many more states have primaries now beginning as early as January
- Parties do not run primaries: individual states organize the primaries
- Individuals enter their names in the primary and “stump” the states



# Primaries

## Winning Delegates for the National Convention

- State parties divide convention delegates differently: some by vote ratio, others by winner-take-all
- Influence of early primaries: who is electable?
- Drop-outs pass their supporters to other candidates



# Reaching the People

## The Selling of the Candidate

- Retail Politics – small groups and town halls for selected audiences
- Debates -- Playing to national audiences and against rivals
- Public airing of candidates' personalities, perspectives and positions
- More debates than ever as party rivals try to distance themselves from each other.





# Media Playing to the Public

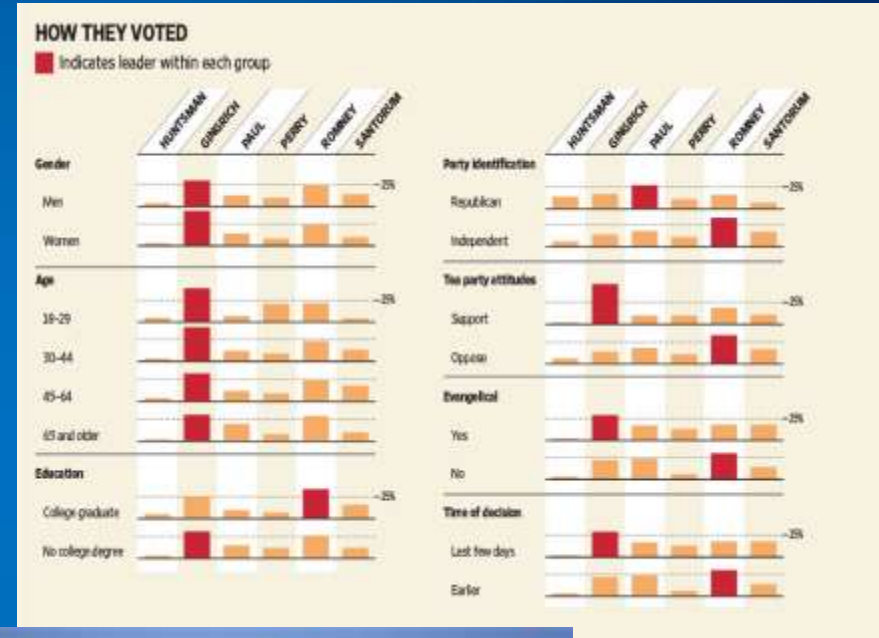
- Playing to the public through the media – direct statements
- Select interviews to mass media, TV and radio talks shows
- BUT Media has its own agenda



# Media

## Playing to the Public

- Media judgments: polls, reports and evaluations of debates and public statements
- Advertising – paying for TV and radio ads. New media
- Social media – addressing audiences via Facebook and twitter, etc.



# Issues: All Politics is Local

- Voter concerns are those that affect the individual and the family.
  - Economy/Jobs (not Steve)
  - Big government versus small: rights versus responsibilities
  - Taxes/Social Security
  - Immigration: legal and especially illegal
  - Family Values: Abortion, Gay marriage etc.
  - Health Care
  - Government Ethics and Corruption





# Campaign Finance: How to Pay

- Costs of running a campaign: candidate state and national organizations, advertising, travel, etc.
- Do you have to have personal wealth to run?
- Where does the money come from? Individual contributions and interest groups
- Fundraising regulations; Campaign reporting requirements

**Big business: In 2008, \$5.3 billion spent**





# Conventions

## Launching the Candidate and Campaign

- Based on primaries, the candidate with the most pledged delegates is endorsed
- Party develops an election platform that represents their policy priorities
- Presidential Candidate chooses vice-presidential running mate



# Conventions

## Launching the Candidate and Campaign

- Republicans will meet in Tampa, FL – August 27-20
- Democrats will meet in Charlotte, NC – September 3-6
- The Democrats will be able to use the Convention to launch their campaign on Labor Day, the day traditionally used to start the 10-week run to Election Day November 6



# Winning

- Electors from all the states gather in Washington in December to cast their votes
- Most states have a winner-take-all rule but a few allow proportional votes
- A candidate must receive a majority of 270 of 538 votes (total number of Representatives and Senators). In case of a tie, the vote goes to the current House of Representatives with one vote per state





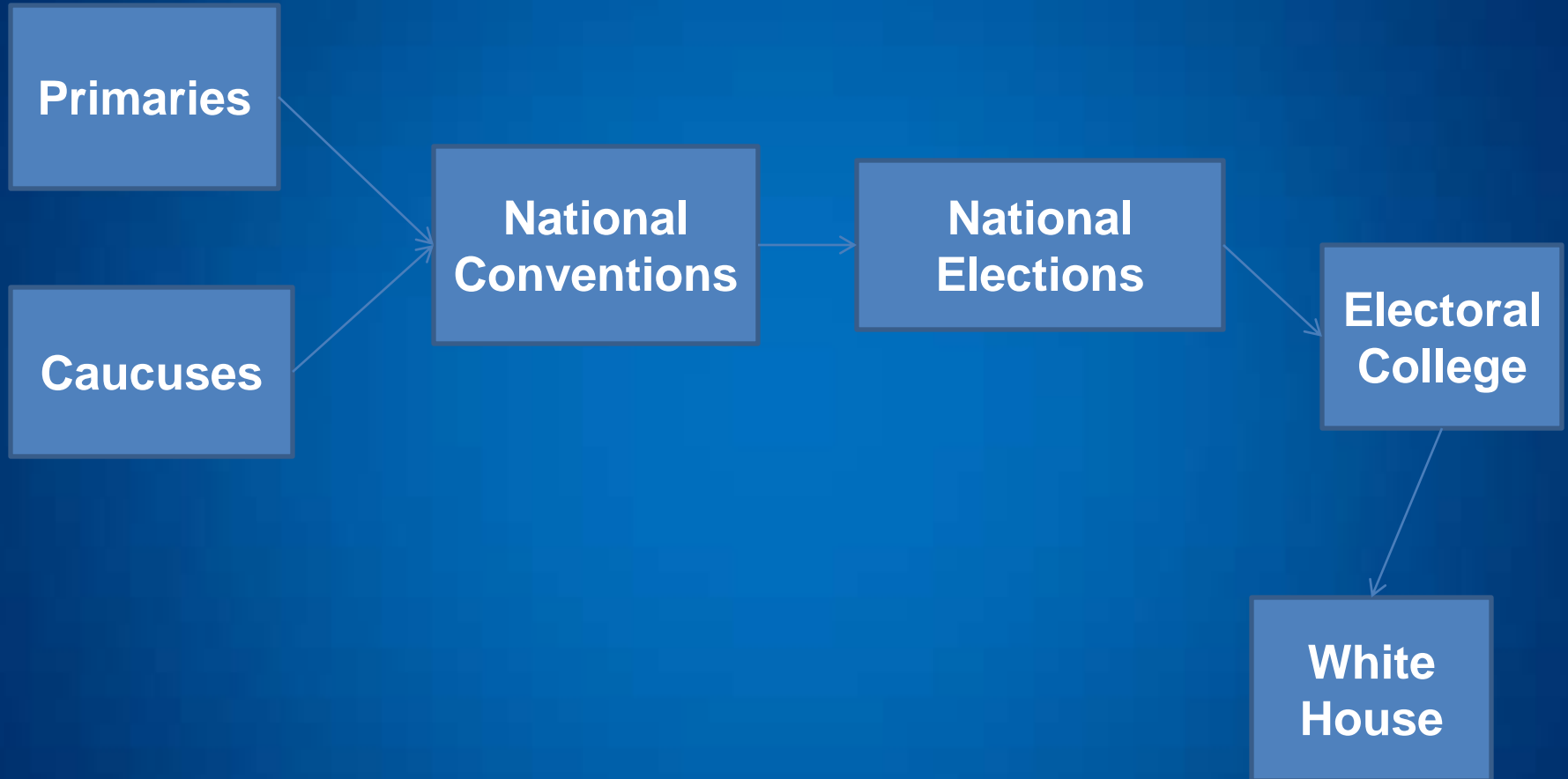
# Winning

- It is possible to win in the electoral college with as few as 15 states but lose the popular vote by a wide margin
- Third parties can seriously tip the balance of the election so a candidate can win with only a plurality as long as he wins enough electoral votes
- The Vice President is elected on a separate ballot





# Steps to the Presidency



# American Democracy – 2012 Elections

Questions?

Thank you!

